A BRITISH FRIENDSHIP

AND

MEMOIR

OF THE

EARL OF ELGIN

AND KINCARDINE.

WINDERMERE: PRINTED BY J. GARNETT.

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AND

MEMOIR OF THE EARL OF ELGIN AND KINCARDINE

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BY HARRIET MARTINEAU.

(FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.)

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1866.

A BRITISH FRIENDSHIP.

At this time thirty years ago there were three young men at Christ Church, Oxford, — almost of the same age, all good students, all interested in matters which lay outside their books, and all cordially respecting and admiring each other. Two of the three were of a reserved cast of character, while the third was frank and fluent, though perhaps as discreet at bottom as his prouder-looking friends. Each desired to do something to distinguish his name, and benefit his generation: and each had high expectations of what the other two would do. In February last, some memorable observances took place which have brought back some moving old associations with these three youths.

Thirty years ago, James Bruce was two-and-twenty, and carried an air of seniority over his comrades who were but one-and-twenty. Yet he was the frank and fluent one, and they the shy and reserved. James Andrew Ramsay was Scotch, as Bruce was. The third, Charles John Canning was, I need not say, English. Ramsay was the son of an earl; Bruce of an earl also, — the Earl of Elgin, who brought over the marbles which visitors to the British Museum know so well: and

Canning was no doubt prouder of the title of son of his father than his friends could be of their ancestral honours. We should be glad to know now the turn that conversation took between these youths when they anticipated their careers of active life: and there is something very solemn in looking back upon the unconsciousness in which they were living of the remarkable relation their three lives were to bear to each other. All three no doubt assumed that political service would occupy their years and their energies, and they might often imagine how they would act together, and what guidance their co-operation might impress upon events: but no speculations, plans or dreams of their own could approach in singularity and gravity the actual developments which have been witnessed by some of us who were men when they were school-boys, and who live to tell their story over two of their three graves.

It was in 1833 that they took their honours at Oxford. In another ten years, Bruce, having succeeded to his father's title, and been thereby removed from the House of Commons, was governing Jamaica. He ruled with sense and courage, but with a heavy heart; for on arriving with his young wife, they underwent a fearful shipwreck; and she escaped death at the moment only to die a year later in childbed. The surviving daughter of that marriage was the bridesmaid of the Princess of Wales last month. The other two friends were in the public service also. Ramsay had become the tenth Earl of Dalhousie; and he was now Vice-President of the Board of Trade, and a Privy-Councillor. Canning was

Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the Peel Ministry of that time. Thus far, the duties of the three comrades lay wide apart, and there was no indication of any peculiar bond which was to unite their names for posterity. The time, however, was approaching.

When the second ten years came to an end, Lord Elgin had made himself a sound and high reputation as Governor-General of Canada. His second wife, the eldest surviving daughter of Lord Durham, was living among the scenes she had known when her father was saving and regenerating Canada, and seeing her husband carrying out, with great energy and discretion, her father's policy. Lord Canning was now at the Post Office, relinquishing his patronage, and devoting his energies to carry to perfection a department of the public service which could never bring him any brilliant honours or rewards. Some of us may be able to recal some feelings of mortification on the one hand, or of amusement on the other, at the son of George Canning being known as the steady and diligent man of business, of moderate ability and languid ambition, satisfied to have something useful to do. Such was the common notion of the man: but he had two friends at least who could have told us that we did not know him yet.

And where now was Lord Dalhousie? He seemed to stand as much higher than Elgin as Elgin stood higher than Canning. He was Governor-General of India.

At first, the public wondered that a man should be taken from the Board of Trade to rule such an empire

as India: but it was not very long before the world became occupied with him as a statesman, far more than as an economist; and we heard a great deal of his policy. The Indian policy of Lord Dalhousie became one of the chief topics of public interest; and it was felt that there must be something remarkable about the man who was the youngest statesman ever appointed to a position of such responsibility. Great mistakes were made about his policy,—partly from the ignorance of Indian affairs then prevalent in England, and partly from his own excessive reserve. Because the Punjaub came into our possession in his time, and then some smaller States, and at length Oude, it was assumed that Lord Dalhousie's policy was one of "annexation." It may be better seen elsewhere how untrue this was, and how much more earnestly the Governor-General desired many things than any extension of our Indian territory. In this place I can point out only two or three incidents which mark the spirit of his rule, and link his destiny with that of his early friends.

He was, if not the father, the guardian of the Great East Indian Railway; and when he stood to witness the departure of the first train, he was witnessing the doom of the hitherto invincible ignorance, prejudice, and superstition of India. Within a little while, he saw the Hindoo priests, and teachers, and public, discussing the subject of pilgrimages,—the merits of which seemed to be largely affected by the ease with which the country could now be traversed by steam. He established in some regions a system of vernacular

schools, and advanced the education of the people with as much zeal as any predecessor, and with far more wisdom than the wisest. While our Indian empire itself was growing, and while the minds and fortunes of the people within it were growing in full proportion, Lord Dalhousie had a heavy care on his mind. So many officers were withdrawn from military duty for other service,—political, civil engineering, and administrative in various ways;—that he was alarmed about the military efficiency of the forces in the country. Again, those forces were declining in number, while the new extensions of territory required an increase. He was anything but an alarmist; but he urged a strong reinforcement of officers; and also a distribution of the troops, by which the safety of the country might be better secured than it could be while European battalions were withdrawn from Bengal, for service in the Crimea and in Pegu, and to garrison our new territories to the north-west. He said there must be three more battalions in Bengal; and the distribution of the troops must be rearranged. When he went from one to another of our military stations,—Cawnpore, no doubt, for one, whenever he passed between the seat of Government and the Upper Provinces,—he made the most penetrating inquiries into the state of mind and temper of the forces, native and European, and insisted with all his authority and influence on the vital importance of cultivating a frank and considerate intercourse with the native soldiery, of all races and persuasions. It was regarded as impossible to distribute the forces as

he advised and desired. If his word had been taken for the probable consequences, the effort might have been found practicable; and, among other results, the lives of his two comrades would have been very different from what they have actually been.

After seven years of tremendous work, during which he passed through the labours of all his lieutenants, so far as that his mind was always accessible to them, and his interest engaged in their duty, Lord Dalhousie was worn out; and in another year he came home.

It must have been a remarkable day in his life, when he sat in Government House at Calcutta, hearing the salutes down the river, and the noise outside, which told of the arrival of his successor; and when he went to the door to meet and bring in that successor,—his old comrade Canning!

We know how they met. The worn-out man handed to the fresh man a telegram just arrived, which announced that all was well in Oude—newly annexed.

The consultation of the few following days must have been of the deepest interest,—far transcending anything they had imagined in their Christ Church days, though there are romantic dreams in college of political friendships more potent than rivalries. The freshman had not everything to learn; for he had been a member of the Government which had co-operated with and guided the Governor-General. Their intercourse was not that of guide and disciple so much as that of statesmen in partnership, one of whom was now

retiring. When the worn-out one was carried on board ship, he left his successor impressed with the sense of the constant danger of the Europeans in India, till the old terms of confidence with the native troops could be restored, the forces better officered, and the whole more prudently distributed. The new territories were far less dangerous in themselves than as abstracting the securities of the oldest districts: and one of the warnings delivered to Lord Canning by Lord Dalhousie was, that there was more peril in the region about Calcutta than beyond the Sutlej.

We were disappointed of Lord Dalhousie's accounts of Indian affairs in Parliament. There was again much wonder that a Postmaster-General, as before a Vice-President of the Board of Trade, should be sent out to rule hundreds of millions of men: and there was no little vexation that Lord Dalhousie was neither seen nor heard. He was very ill; and soon, when bad news began to arrive from India, he was bitterly blamed, and wildly misjudged. His pride and his humility, his temperament and his judgment, co-operated to keep him silent. He would wait for justice. He would some day show that the mutiny was owing to other causes than any policy of his. He could not endure to thrust his own complaints on public attention at a time of national calamity: and so he sank in dumb submission to misconstruction, and self-reliance as to the wisdom as well as the rectitude of his course. No doubt he was well aware that he would be justified by the faithful efforts of his friends, and especially of the

successor who could best appreciate and explain his policy.

While he was lying ill, and deprived, as he thought, of the honour due to his rule, there was a time when his sympathies must have been strongly with his two old friends. Lord Elgin was on his voyage as ambassador to China in 1857, when the news of the Indian mutiny reached him, with an appeal from Lord Canning for aid. After an hour of anxious meditation, he resolved on a step worthy of a patriotic statesman, and singularly graceful under the circumstances. He decided to suspend his own mission, in order to give India the benefit of the whole force he carried with him, and his personal presence. Many as had been the pleasant meetings he and Lord Canning had had in the course of their lives, none could have compared in satisfaction with that on the steps of the Government House at Calcutta, when Lord Elgin followed in person the wonderful and welcome news that he was coming up the Ganges with reinforcements, which could not have astonished the natives on the banks more if they had come up from the waters or down from the sky. During the weeks of Lord Elgin's detention in India, before the new batch of forces for China reached Calcutta, his presence and his counsel must have been infinitely supporting to his old friend. Nothing could be finer than the calm bearing of Lord and Lady Canning from the beginning of the season of horror, when it seemed probable that the last European in India might be slaughtered before any adequate help could arrive.

The natives gazed in the great man's face day by day, and they saw no change. Every evening Lady Canning was seen going out for her airing as if nothing was happening: and when another great man came up from the sea with ships and soldiers, the audacity of rebellion was cowed in Calcutta, and far beyond it.

The horrors of the Cawnpore massacre were enough to have turned the brain of a woman of less calmness and devotedness than Lady Canning; and her husband and his friend must have felt more for her than she did for herself. The officers and their wives and children, whom the Cannings knew face to face, and some of whom they had visited in their cantonments at Cawnpore, were slaughtered like cattle; and the ladies and children cut to pieces and thrown into the well, which I need not describe. Here were realities of life, such as the young Bruce and Canning had little thought of encountering together, in the old college days. Lady Elgin was safe at home; but she was not much the happier for that; and from no friend at home had Lady Canning a more cordial sympathy.

Lord Elgin proceeded to his great work in China, thinking of anything rather than that he should again be welcomed by his friend Canning on those steps of Government House, and taken into council over the same desk, about the affairs of the same empire. There had been great changes in less than five years. Lord Elgin had established the new relations between China and our country; and Lord Canning had saved our Indian empire. Their old friend had sunk into his

grave, interested to the last in their achievements when his own were over, and were apparently misjudged and almost rejected.

There were other changes, as both painfully felt.

Lady Canning's face and voice were absent. She had sunk under the climate, and partly perhaps from the consequences of the suspense and agony of the year of the rebellion. Her husband was not like the same man. His spirit was broken when he lost her; and Lord Elgin saw this in his face at their meeting.

Once more—knowing that it was for the last time—the friends exchanged confidence. They spent many hours in discussing the interests of the hundreds of millions of human beings whom the one was turning over to the rule of the other. Lord Elgin's hope was that his friend would still be, for a time, an effectual aid to India and to him in Parliament; and, though they would hardly meet again, they might yet work together at the same great task. Still, he must have had misgivings that all was over when he looked upon the haggard face and wasted form which sanguine people said would be restored by the voyage.

It was a great and memorable administration,—that of Lord Canning. Many of us were fully aware of it; and it was generally appreciated much less imperfectly than that of Lord Dalhousie. Not only was public attention more earnestly directed to India than ever before; but India, having come under parliamentary government, had converted an anomalous and external kind of interest into a national one. No expectations

were too high of the honours that would be awarded to the first Viceroy of India, as soon as he should have recruited enough from the fatigues of his return to appear in public. But, while his friend in India was looking for the news of Lord Canning's reception, and of the beginning of his services to India in Parliament; and while we were waiting to see him come out into our streets and parks, he was slipping away. Before he could receive the first instalments of the national acknowledgments, he was dead. When his friend at Calcutta was hoping for some revival of his strength, however temporary, the news came of a funeral in Westminster Abbey, and of the long and noble train of great citizens who were eager to follow the son of George Canning to his grave.

Amidst the overwhelming cares and pressing business of his Indian rule, Lord Canning had lost nothing of the keenness of feeling with which he thought of the Englishwomen and their young daughters who filled the horrible tomb at Cawnpore. He took a deep interest in the plans for laying out the grounds round the well, by which the graves of the soldiers who perished were to be enclosed with the hideous one of the ladies and children, and the whole made a monument of the year of tribulation. It was reserved for the friend who had mourned over the calamity with him to fill his place at the consecration of this monument; and this was done by Lord Elgin on the 11th of February last.

Each friend has always been worthy of the other in the thorough devotedness to duty and the national

service which gives heroic composure to the statesman in office, as well as to the general in command. As Lord Elgin stood "like a statue" on the upper pavement of the well, in the sight of all the people, his countenance and bearing were as calm as Lord Canning's were in his daily rides in 1857, when the people looked in his face for a reflexion of the news from the upper country, and always saw grave composure. But there was sorrow in the heart of the survivor, as there had been in his who was gone. There was sorrow in all hearts, no doubt;—in all within the enclosure, and, we are assured, in those of the natives outside. But Lord and Lady Elgin were mourning others than those who were buried there. They were thinking of the brave-hearted and unselfish woman who lay in her grave at Calcutta, and of her husband under the pavement of Westminster Abbey. To them at such a moment it must have seemed as if they had had more to do with death than with life. Something of this is disclosed in the address of Lord Elgin on the evening of the great day of the opening of the East Indian railway line to Benares, when he remarked on Lord Canning having proposed the health of Lord Dalhousie at the opening of a former portion of the line. He referred briefly, and evidently because he could not help it, to the relations which had existed between the three friends of a lifetime. "It is a singular coincidence," he said, "that three successive Governors-General should have stood towards each other in this relationship of age and intimacy." The singular con-

dition of welfare at which India is evidently arriving shows that the circumstance is as happy as it is remarkable.

Amidst the brightest times to come, and the most blessed fortunes that can be in store for India, there will always be,—as there ought always to be,—a strain of melancholy mingled with the rejoicing. The address of the Bishop of Calcutta, delivered from the monument, will probably be the best and longest remembered sermon of the age. Lord Elgin appears to the people now as the survivor of a series of regenerating rulers of India, who have sacrificed themselves to their work: and when his monument is reared (long hence may it be!) it will be remembered how it was that he was in India during the summer of the mutiny, and that he presided at the dedication of the sacred enclosure at Cawnpore. In all time to come the spirit of the inscription on the monument will hang round the statesmanship and the statesmen of the period of the mutiny, as well as round the memory of the sufferers under its agonies. "These are they which came out of great tribulation," says the monument; and the sentiment of a future day, happier even than the present, may include under the description many more of the contemporaries of the transition stage of India than those whose bones lie there.

In the midst of the great moving picture of Indian history, during the middle period of our century, we may have a moment's attention to spare for the friendship of the three rulers of the time; and some

sympathy for them under the discovery so clearly appointed to them,—that the fulfilment of the highest and most lawful dreams of youthful ambition involves a very full experience of the mournfulness of human life.

April, 1863.

DECEMBER, 1866.

THIS Memorial of a remarkable friendship was written nearly seven years ago, when "the great moving picture of Indian History" was about to reveal to us its too natural close. The hope expressed in the last page that it might be long before Lord Elgin's monument was reared was penned with a misgiving suppressed at the moment, but now well remembered. The narrative was, however, read by himself, and, as we now know, with a consciousness that it was probable that he would soon follow his two friends. He was also under the pressure of a domestic grief when he read it. His third son, a promising boy of ten years old, had died in Scotland in June; and the parents were resigning themselves to their bereavement in retreat at Simla when this story of one of their friendships reached them from their distant home. Soon after, his duty led the

Viceroy further to the North-west; and the natural revival from the first shock of their loss was assisted by travel through the mountain scenery above the Punjaub; and there, on the very summit of the Jilauri Pass, they sat in the shade, and read another greeting from home, which supposed a continuance of the life and energy which were on the point of being laid low. A paper by the same hand, "Old and New Times for the Hindoos," sketched out the career of beneficence towards India which their country hoped to see fulfilled before they should return to receive the honour and gratitude which would be the due of such a Ruler of hundreds of millions of men. Instead of this, the decree was that the husband and father should never more issue from these mountains, and that the wife and little daughter should traverse in the fulness of grief the wide regions of land and sea which lay between his grave and home. Lady Elgin did not attempt the fearful Rotang Pass; but his enterprising spirit and love of natural beauty led him through it; and there his fate was sealed. The fatigue and the cold of that journey developed the incipient heart-disease which must have existed for some time. He reached Dhurmsala, and never left it. He died there in November.

It is for those who loved him most and were nearest to him to dwell on his patience under fearful and continuous pain, and the courage and cheerfulness with which he acquiesced in an untimely removal from life,—as life was to him, with its usefulness and honour, its domestic endearments, and the congenial exercise it

afforded to all the faculties of a richly-endowed nature. It is for Society to mourn, with a religious awe, the sacrifice at which it is served by such men as these in its highest offices. It is for the thoughtful observer of the solemn and mysterious drama of human life to note, as among its most striking scenes, — the most moving and impressive — the characteristic close of the last of these lives, as of the other two. Their graves are wide apart — in Scotland, in Westminster Abbey, and in the upland cemetery in a gorge of the Himalayas; but they will be remembered in the extraordinary union of their earliest and latest stages of manhood, — in their term of preparation for public life, and in their successive occupation of the last great scene of it. A private friendship like this becomes an element of the history of the time and country which it illustrated and adorned.

MEMOIR

OF

THE EARL OF ELGIN AND KINCARDINE.

LORD ELGIN has done more in his half century of life — has, as we may say, had and enjoyed more life than most men who die at last of old age: yet it is with keen regret that his country sees his career closed twenty years before its time; and those who have any knowledge of his personal circumstances cannot but suffer bitter pain in seeing at what sacrifice he has been fulfilling the perilous duty of governing India.

James Bruce, the eldest son of the Scotch Earl of Elgin, who gave us the marbles in the British Museum, was born in 1811. Eton was his school, and Christchurch, Oxford, was his college. There must be many men now living who can remember the trio of friends associating at college, so unconscious of any peculiarity in their destiny, but preparing in fact to present a remarkable spectacle to the world. Bruce was the elder, a year older than the other two. Ramsay was Scotch, like Bruce; and both were sons of earls. The third was the son of a commoner, but with reason to be as proud of his name as any other man, for his father

was George Canning. No doubt these three youths all had their aspirations, and had already chosen public life for their field of action; but what would have been their emotions — with what solemn feelings they would have gazed on each other, if they could have known that they were to be the three successive rulers of India during the transition period of British government there! Ramsay, as Lord Dalhousie, the last before the mutiny; Canning the overruler of the mutiny; and Bruce, as Lord Elgin, the first who went out as Viceroy after the Indian Empire was brought under the government of the Crown. It is less than a year (11th of February last) since Lord Elgin himself said, after presiding over the consecration of the well at Cawnpore, "It is a singular coincidence that three successive Governors-General should have stood in this relationship of age and intimacy." He said this on occasion of the opening of the East Indian Railway to Benares, now carried to within a few miles of Delhi. At the opening of a former portion of the line, Lord Canning had proposed the health of Lord Dalhousie; and now Lord Elgin was grieving over the death of his friend Canning; and we, in recalling what took place within this present year, have now to mourn that the survivor of last February is himself gone, before he had well entered upon his task of governing India. They co-operated well for India, each in his day; and their names will be remembered together in the history of that empire. When Canning arrived at Government House, at Calcutta, Lord Dalhousie handed him the telegram which told

that all was going right in the newly-annexed territory of Oude; and Canning took care of that and all other bequests of his predecessor, as soon as the subsidence of the mutiny gave him power to do so. For his part, in the darkest hour of doubt about the issue of the mutiny, he too knew what it was to have a friend and old comrade come to Government House with cheer in his face and on his lips. While the Cannings sat, brave and calm, but in utter uncertainty whether every European in India would not have been murdered within a month, Lord Elgin appeared, bringing the regiments which had been given him for his mission in China. Learning *en route* what was happening in India, and receiving from Lord Canning an appeal for aid, he decided to sacrifice his own object, and to diverge from his instructions, by taking his soldiers to Calcutta. Always and everywhere welcome from his genial spirit and his unfailing cheerfulness, he might well have the warmest welcome from the Cannings when he brought them the first relief in their fearful strait. When he stood, in the sight of the vast multitude, on the well at Cawnpore last winter, he had other mournful thoughts than of the victims who lay below. He and his wife had visited the grave of Lady Canning at Calcutta; and they knew that her husband was now lying in Westminster Abbey—both of them victims to the conditions of their Indian life—its diseases in the one case, and its toils and responsibilities in the other. And now, the survivor has followed—another victim, we must fear, to those toils and responsibilities.

In following out this singular bond which united the three college friends, we have passed far beyond their college days; and we must return. Each followed the path of public life which opened to him. We have here only to do with Lord Elgin's.

He left Oxford adorned with honours; and a few years later he appeared in Parliament as member for Southampton. This was in 1841. In the next year he began his long course of colonial rule by going out to Jamaica—having by this time succeeded to his Scotch earldom by his father's death. He carried his young wife out with him; they underwent shipwreck; and his wife was saved only to die a year later. The daughter she left him was one of the bridesmaids of the Princess of Wales. Lord Elgin's four years' administration in Jamaica confirmed the expectations of the Government which had appointed him, and won the confidence of that which succeeded it, as appears from a conversation in the House of Lords which our readers may remember, in which Lord Derby and Lord Grey contended for the honour of having first appointed him to office. It was Lord Grey who did it, while some of the first official intercourses of the young statesman were with Lord Derby.

In four years he was wanted to govern Canada; and a more arduous charge a colonial governor could hardly have. The method of responsible government was new there; the provinces were still reeking with the smouldering fires of rebellion; the repulsion of races was at its strongest; the deposed clique who

had virtually ruled the colony were still furious, and the depressed section suspicious and restive. It was just at the time, too, when, between English and American legislation, the Canadians were suffering from the evils of protection and free trade at once. Believing themselves to be made sport of or neglected at home, they were more strongly tempted to join the United States, or at least to cross the frontier and become republican citizens, than they ever were before, or have been since. Lord Elgin was thoroughly aware what he was undertaking in accepting the government of a society so disturbed. He was supported in his task by domestic sympathy of a peculiar character. In the autumn of 1846 he married Lady Mary L. Lambton, the eldest surviving daughter of the Earl of Durham. She had lived in Canada during her father's short administration; she had understood the case enough to have the warmest interest in his policy, its principle, method, and aim. As Lord Elgin's wife, she now saw that policy carried through with vigour, justice, kindliness, and success; she fulfilled the duties which had been her mother's, as hostess and leader of society; and she sustained her husband, as she had seen her father sustained, by intelligent sympathy. On occasion there was no little need of fortitude, as when the Parliament Houses at Montreal were burned down, in 1849. The "British party," as they styled themselves, had to yield to the conditions of impartial government, and to go into opposition when their turn came round. To them it naturally seemed as if the world was coming to an

end. The opposition, or "French party," made use of their first opportunity to obtain an indemnity for the losses of such inhabitants of Lower Canada as had suffered in property during the rebellion. The Rebellion Losses Bill passed with the approbation of all dispassionate persons; and Lord Elgin, in giving it the requisite sanction, finished a transaction which had spread over several years, and employed the anxious care of five commissioners appointed to estimate the damages, and ascertain the innocence of the claimants of all participation in the rebellion. The "British" mob, however, stoned the carriage of the Governor-General as he left the House, and then, while members were yet sitting, broke the windows and burned the building. They met to petition the Queen for the recall of Lord Elgin on the ground that he had been favouring the claims of Her Majesty's enemies; but the better spirit prevailed in the legislature, in which a vote of confidence in the Governor-General, and attachment to the authority he represented, was carried by a large majority. It was in October of the same year that the discomfited malcontents organized an agitation for annexation to the United States, on the ground of their sufferings from the opposite trade policy of the mother country and of their nearest neighbours. Amidst these agitations Lord Elgin pursued a calm and temperate course, industriously applying himself to the development of the country and its resources, by every possible aid that he could afford to all parties. He enjoyed the confidence of each successive Colonial Sec-

retary, as six entered upon the department, and opened correspondence with him; and he won his way in the colony itself so effectually that his successor found the worst discontents appeased, and the internal perils of Canada at an end. So strong was the impression at home of the dignified character of his neutrality, amidst the conflicts of extreme parties, that some surprise and amusement were caused by his speech at the banquet which was given in his honour, on his return in 1855. Perhaps it was the first time for many years that he had been able to speak as a man speaks at home and among friends; certainly he was a man of a frank, genial temper; and, when he spoke at all, he said exactly what he thought. But he was not a rash or intemperate speaker. In his most frank, fluent, and lively utterances, he said nothing which he had any reason afterwards to regret. This character of his oratory was at once appreciated at Calcutta, contrasting as it did with the reserve of his two predecessors. While men there were full of astonishment at the informal and friendly character of the first public address of the new Viceroy, acute observers remarked that there were no indiscreet disclosures in the speech, nothing that need be wished unsaid; and nothing, therefore, that was undignified. In the event, the frankness won confidence and goodwill with singular rapidity, both from Europeans and natives, while experience taught them that there were more kinds of dignity than one; and that to command deference equal to that shown to Lord Dalhousie and Lord Canning, it was not necessary to have their reserve of temper and unbending style of manner.

But between Canada and India were interposed singular scenes of political life. In 1857, Lord Elgin was sent to China, to try what could be done to repair, or to turn to the best account, the mischiefs done by Sir John Bowring's course, and by the patronage of it at home, in the face of the moral reprobation of the people at large. We all remember his success, and the openings which he achieved for the commerce of Europe. With the same energy which determined him to make an opportunity to study the American Republic before he left Canada, he now resolved to learn for himself what he could about China as it is. He went up the great river to Hankow, studying the country and people as he went, and bringing home narratives and impressions which showed his friends, better than any diplomatic transactions ever can, how true and generous were his sympathies with the simple people of that vast empire, under the perils and sufferings of its decay. He was quick to detect any common ground of instinct or feeling—moral or other—between the people whom we usually treat with ridicule and ourselves. Amidst his keen enjoyment of the fine scenery of the Yang-tse-kiang, some of which warmed his heart by its resemblance to his own Scotch Highlands, his eye and his mind were everywhere discerning indications of manners, and reflecting on the uses to be made of new opportunities. He learned lessons both by being attacked and by being courted by the imperialist and rebel people along the river. Whenever his ship grounded he was presently exploring on shore, amidst fields or villages, or entering solitary houses wherever a welcome was offered. In

the same spirit of activity he went up the hills and followed up the valleys of the island of Formosa, using every hour he could command, wherever he went, in learning everything within reach of the country and people whom he was endeavouring to connect with his own in intercourse and good feeling. What he did in Japan is at this hour the foundation of the hope of many of us who would otherwise give up all idea of any sort of Japanese alliance or reciprocity. Lord Elgin was no visionary. His quick sympathies and cheerful views did not impair his good sense, or dim the impressions of his experience. He was not the man to go and see the Japanese in a fit of glamour, and come home and report of them in a paroxysm of enthusiasm. As he, a man of long proved good sense, moderation, tact, and vigilant conscience, believed that Britain and Japan might and ought to be a blessing to each other, many of us hold on to the hope, notwithstanding all that has come to pass since he was there. It is true, he may not have supposed possible such an act as the destruction of Kagosima—an act which could never have been proposed in his presence, or under his management; but still—considering his acuteness of insight into character, and his practical judgment and experience — it is rational perhaps to believe that, managed as he would have managed it, our intercourse with Japan may yet be what he suggested and believed he foresaw.

What he saw of China and the Chinese on his first visit enabled him to appreciate the extent of what he

gained by his negotiation better than anybody at home, outside of the circle of merchant princes, could appreciate it. It could not be expected that the world should believe on the instant that China really was thrown open to European commerce, or that the value of the change should be at once understood. The merchants of London, however, did themselves honour by the thoroughness of their acknowledgment of Lord Elgin's services. Those who were witnesses of the presentation to Lord Elgin of the freedom of the City saw him in one of the happiest hours of his life. He was not a man who required the stimulus of praise, or even sympathy, to keep him to his work. He loved work for its own sake, and of course for its appropriate and special results; and he would have worked on for life, appreciated or overlooked; but he whose sympathies were always ready and warm himself enjoyed being understood and valued: and that welcome in the City was very cheering to him after his long experience of English indifference about Canada and what he had done there.

He held the office of Postmaster-General till the hostile acts of the Chinese government towards the English and French ministers in China rendered it necessary that Lord Elgin should go out again, and accomplish the indispensable object of opening Pekin to our diplomatists, as ports and rivers had been opened to our merchants. To secure this, and to obtain reparation for the recent insult to the European ministers, was the errand of Lord Elgin and Baron Gros, who

went out together, early in 1860, while forces were gathering in China, to accompany them up to Pekin. Lord Elgin had had but too much experience of shipwreck before; and now he had it again, when their ship, the Malabar, was lost upon a reef in Galle harbour. In the midst of the terror and confusion on board, and while the fate of all in the ship was utterly uncertain, the two ambassadors sat together, tranquil and cheerful; their calm courage assisting materially in restoring order and saving life. They refused to enter the boats till all the other passengers were landed; and a few minutes after they and their suites left the ship's side she sank. Not only the decorations and state dresses of the ambassadors, but their credentials went to the bottom, whence they were fished up by divers. If this had not been possible, the whole course of affairs in China might have been different, through the delay caused by waiting for fresh credentials, and the consequent loss of the season in the Chinese seas. As it was, the plenipotentiaries arrived off the Peiho, ready for their work, in July. By November their work was done. The convention was signed at Pekin on the 24th of October, and ratified on the 5th of November.

One of the favouring circumstances of the mission was the cordial understanding which existed throughout between the British and French ambassadors. If they had been short of friendly, fatal mischief might have arisen out of the dangerous conjunction of the military forces of the two countries. We know something of what happened about the sack of the Summer Palace,

and on other occasions of collision. But the two ambassadors prevented all serious mischief by their mutual confidence, their united action, and the generous prudence and silence with which they treated passing vexations. Lord Elgin was the very man for such a function of conciliation; and especially where France is concerned. In him were united some of the highest characteristics of both nations. If in his unconscious courage, his stedfastness of purpose, his idea and habit of domestic life, and the nature of his political ambition, he was altogether a Briton, he might have been a Frenchman for his gaiety of temper, his incessant activity, and his quick and ready tact and sympathies. His mission required a cultivation of French goodwill, as much, perhaps, as of Chinese confidence; and he succeeded thoroughly with both. He returned, as sensible as ever to the shock of the failure of his first expedition, which he had always pointed out as the probable consequence of his being vexatiously prevented from going up to Pekin; but now satisfied that his work was really and effectually done. Not only was English diplomacy established in Pekin, but a genuine intercourse was carried on with the government of China. Lord Elgin was in no way responsible for our former doings in China, nor for the position in which they left us. The duty of raising our relations with that empire to a higher, firmer, and more open ground must be done: he undertook it, and there seems to be no question on any hand that he did it well. He and his coadjutor, Baron Gros, certainly left a strong impression behind them of their

frank wisdom and scrupulous honour, as men and as plenipotentiaries.

Even before his arrival at home early in 1861, he was fixed upon by the public expectation as the successor of Lord Canning in India. It was never without a pang that his wife heard of this; and her dread of that appointment never relaxed. As for him, he prepared for his new work with his characteristic alacrity, and was ready with the personal sacrifices which were a matter of course with him when duty required them. There were four young sons to be left behind; and this was not all. At Christmas, 1846, he had left his bride at home, to spare her the worst cold of Canada; and now he left his wife behind, to spare her the extreme heat of India. Together they visited the Queen at Osborne, in the first weeks of her widowhood—a circumstance which may now be dwelt on with a true though mournful satisfaction: and then the husband and father went on alone. His boys had seen him for the last time. His wife and little daughter went out to him as soon as permitted, in November of last year. Before she reached him he had been ill—from the Calcutta atmosphere, of course. It was soon evident that, if he was to remain at all fit for work, he must (as every new comer must) avoid Calcutta, and "wander about," as carping observers say, or contrive to get meetings of the Council in some central place where Europeans can both live and work. For the summer he went to the Hills, according to custom; and it was at Simla that he received the news of the death of his

third son—a fine boy of ten. This was something more than the first break in the happy family circle. It shook all confidence about the rest, during the long years of separation yet to be fulfilled. When the necessity for moving came, the effect of travelling in the hill ranges was salutary. The splendours of nature there were at once rousing and soothing; and it is a satisfaction now to think what his latest pleasures were. It has been suggested that the ascent of the Jilauri pass, 13,000 feet above the plains, may have been fatally injurious to him; but those about him spoke of him as well at a later time. The spectacle of the vast icy range, as seen between the openings of mountains loftier than we ever see, gratified in the highest degree his love of natural beauty; and it is a consolation to think that such was the picture which was last received into his mind, and that it remains in the heart of her whose friendship was the best blessing of his life.

They were on their way to other and very different scenes of grandeur. We know what the great assemblage in the North-West provinces was to be over which he was to preside. We turn away from the thought of it now. His death puts away the whole pageant, and even the serious interests implicated with it, to the furthest horizon of our imagination. We can attend only to what is nearest, and especially to the thought of the enormous sacrifice at which the service of such men is obtained for the nation to which they belong. It cannot be said that, but for his toils, his exposure to many climates, and his overwhelming responsibilities,

Lord Elgin might have not lived to the natural period of the life of man. As it is, he is gone at fifty-two. When we think of the young daughters, of the boys deprived of him just when arriving at the need of his care, and of other interests, private and public, we feel as if there must be crime somewhere, that such sacrifices have been repeated so often. It seems scarcely possible to say more than has been long and often said about the perils of Calcutta. We know that the mere climate of India is not dangerous, but that there is in Calcutta, and in almost every station, an assemblage of every evil condition, which requires only the application of heat to be rendered murderous. The highest functionaries cannot altogether escape these conditions; and they have, besides, their perils of over-work and anxiety. In such a position a man may die of that position, without any one of the four or five maladies which carry off thousands of our soldiers and civilians there. Any predisposition may be fatally wrought upon; the weakest part of the frame gives way; and another great man goes down early to his grave.

There rest now the three friends—living so much the same life with such different qualities and powers, charged finally with the same great duty and destiny, and dying the same death. In the noble line of rulers of India they will, in their order, form a group of singular interest, standing on the boundary-line of the old and the new systems of Indian rule. Thus they will always be remembered together, and regarded as apart.